

Violence in Baltimore

Social Science Resources for Journalists and Public Officials (Second Edition)

Gangs

Violence

Crime

Drop outs

Marriage

Divorce

Welfare

Poverty

Abuse

High school



May 2015



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Preface

On April 27, 2015 Maryland Governor Larry Hogan declared a state of emergency in response to the growing violence and unrest in Baltimore City. Freddie Gray's premature death was used as an occasion for arson, looting, and mob aggression among Baltimore's citizens. The rest of America looked on in amazement, concern, and frustration, as the Mayor and Governor searched for answers.

But sadly, Baltimore's social woes are anything but extraordinary. Baltimore has the fifth highest murder rate and the seventh-highest violent crime rate in America, and criminal activity only seems to be increasing. Top-down government reform has largely failed and will likely continue to fail until leaders of other institutions in society (not just policymakers) promote intact married families, the strongest generator of educated youth, low delinquency, economic growth, and sexual mores. Major federal and state public policy outcomes illustrate government's incompetence as an independent actor in maintaining social order, as well as its dependence on the intact married family for the achievement of its policy goals. Government will continue to fail to reduce these social problems as long as it sees itself as the primary actor. Other major institutions—churches, schools and universities, businesses—all need to play their role in restoring and supporting marriage where it is most vulnerable: among the poor.²

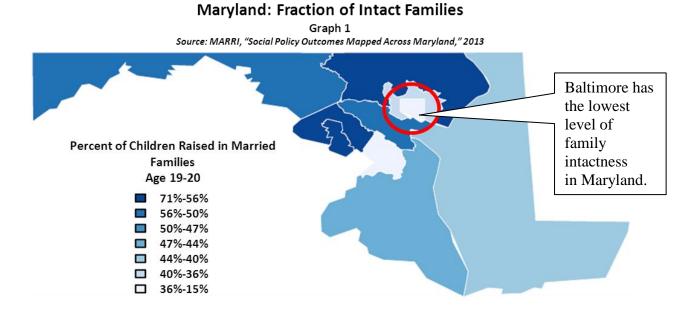


Family Intactness of Maryland

Family structure profoundly impacts the lives of children. An intact family fosters an environment of belonging among youth that increases their likelihood of exceling in education, improved health, economic security, and religious practice. Family brokenness, however, creates a sense of rejection that can thwart proper growth. Consider the state of families in Maryland, and specifically Baltimore:³

- In Maryland, the fraction of 17-year-olds who have grown up in intact families with their married mother and father is approximately 47.3 percent.⁴
- Baltimore is one of the *five least* intact counties of America, along with Cuyahoga, OH; Bronx County, NY; District of Columbia; Shelby County, TN.⁵
- In Baltimore, only 16 percent of 15- to 17-year-olds have been raised by both their married parents. ⁶

Family intactness is roughly as important as high school education and more important than college education in influencing outcomes of public policy interest.^{7, 8}



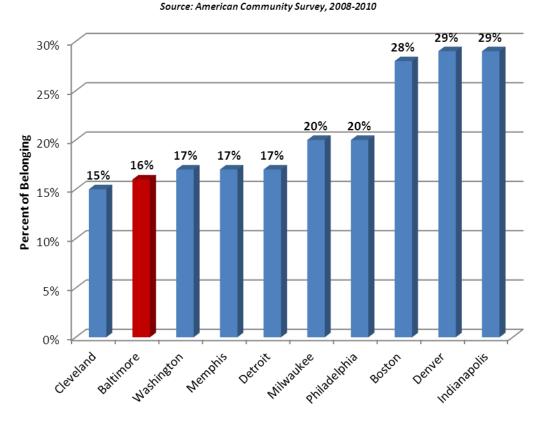


Role of Race

Many claim that race determines negative outcomes – this is not the case.

- According to MARRI research, based on federal survey data, family intactness is a greater determinant of a state's well-being than other explanatory variables, including: the percentage of a state's population that has completed high school, a state's population density, and a state's racial composition.
- Only family intactness has a clear, consistent positive or negative impact on state outcomes. Once family intactness, high school drop-out levels, and other demographic factors are taken into account, the fraction of blacks or Hispanics has no, or very little, detrimental influence on the outcomes studied. 10

The Least Intact Cities in America* Graph 2



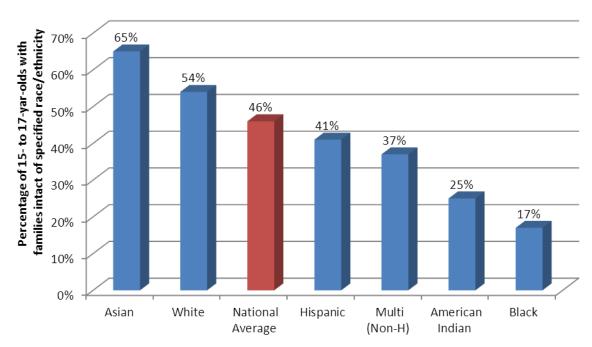
* of the 45 largest cities in America

Because Black youth are least likely to come from intact families, the public frequently confounds the roles of race and family intactness in shaping adolescents.



Race/Ethnicity in Rank Order by Family Belonging Index, 2008-2011

Graph 3
Source: American Community Survey, 2008-2011



Regarding Criminal Activity, Consider:

- While serious crime is highest in socially disorganized, largely urban neighborhoods, its frequency is dependent on marriage and not race. 11
- Among broken families, with their chaotic, "dysfunctional" relationships, whether white or black, the crime rate is very high.
- Among married two-parent families, whether white or black, the crime rate is very low. 12

Regarding Poverty, Also Consider:

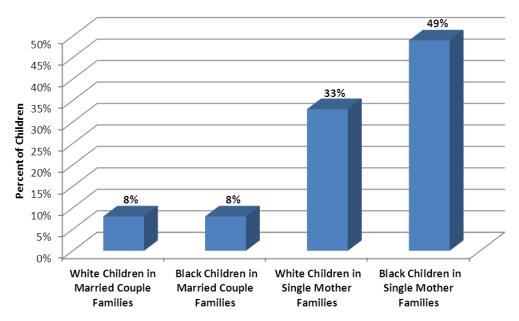
- Amongst those children coming from *married-couple families* living in households below the poverty level, 3.2 percent are Non-Hispanic White, 7.0 percent are Black, and 13.2 percent are Hispanic.
- Amongst those children living in *mother-only families* that are below poverty, 22.0 percent are Non-Hispanic White, 35.6 percent are Black, and 37.9 percent are Hispanic.
- Statistics from the *U.S. Census Bureau* show that race and ethnicity alone do not account for setbacks in upward mobility. ¹³



- The differences between family structures, even within the same ethnic group, are associated with differences in child poverty rates.
 - The poverty rate for white married-couple families is almost seven times lower than for white non-married families.
 - The poverty rate for black married-couple families is five times lower than for black non-married families.
 - The poverty rate for black married-couple families is three times *lower* than for white non-married families.¹⁴

Much of the Difference in Black and White Child Poverty is Due to Difference in Marriage





Baltimore

The city of Baltimore has a little fewer than 4,000 white 15- to 17-year olds, and just over half–nearly 2,000–have seen the break-up of their family of origin. This is in line with the national experience.

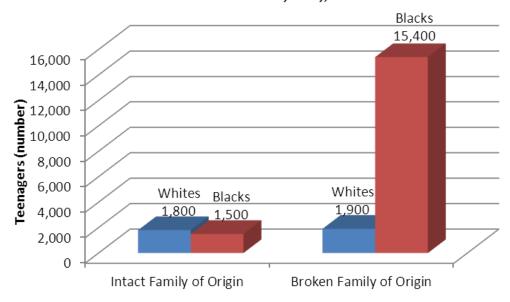
The experience of black Baltimore teens on the cusp of adulthood is different. Over 15,000 have seen the break-up of their biological parents. But only 1,500 black 15- to 17-year-old residents of Baltimore have not experienced that act of rejection. So, for every one black resident of Baltimore who has not experienced family rejection, there are ten who have. More than 90 percent of black Baltimore teens on the cusp of adulthood witness parental rejection.

^a Population counts, taken from the American Community Survey 2008-2013, are known to a precision of about +/-200 kids. There are 137,400 children (of any age) found in Baltimore.



Baltimore Teenagers on the Cusp of Adulthood, by Race & Family Experience: Rejection Experienced by 15- to 17-Year-Old White & Black Residents in Baltimore

Graph 5
Source: American Community Survey, 2008-2013



Poverty in Baltimore is strongly influenced by this gaping disparity. The influence of family intactness on the probability of a child (0- to 17-years old) being poor dwarfs the influence of race. ¹⁵

The influence of parental rejection is also greater than that of living only with parents who have dropped out of high school. The "adjusted mean" level of child poverty in Baltimore is about 29 percent. Being black raises this rate of poverty by almost 9 percent. Living in a household only with parents who have dropped out of high school further raises this number by around 13 percent. Living in a home where no parent has rejected the other lowers this rate of poverty by more than 15 percent, more than half the baseline rate of childhood poverty in the city.

intactness of a child's family of origin. The adjustment is computed by an ordinary least squares regression on sampled Baltimore children (N 6440; R^2 0.14). Only significant factors (p < 0.05) shall be reported for any regression.

^b This mean is adjusted for race (i.e., if one is non-white), parents not being high-school graduates, and the intactness of a child's family of origin. The adjustment is computed by an ordinary least squares regression



Crime

Violence

The evidence from the professional literature is overwhelming: teenage criminal behavior has its roots in habitual deprivation of parental love and affection often going back to early infancy. Future violent delinquents most frequently have a chaotic family life. ¹⁶

- Compared to students from intact families, college students from divorced families use violence more frequently to resolve conflict and are more likely to be aggressive and physically violent with their friends, male or female.¹⁷
- Parental divorce contributes to what some studies term "externalizing behaviors, which include weapon carrying, fighting, substance abuse, and binge drinking.¹⁸
- State-by-state analysis indicates that, in general, a 10 percent increase in the number of children living in single-parent homes (including divorces) accompanies a 17 percent increase in juvenile crime. ^{19,20}
- Inconsistent parenting, ²¹ family turmoil, ²² and multiple other stresses (such as economic hardship and psychiatric illnesses) ²³ that flow from these disagreements compound the rejection of these children by their parents, ²⁴ many of whom became criminals during childhood. ²⁵
- Research shows that only 6 percent of children from stable, safe homes become
 delinquent. Comparatively, 18 percent of children from homes rated as either
 unstable or unsafe (broken marriage or lack of supervision) became delinquent.
 However, 90 percent of children from homes rated as both unstable and unsafe
 became delinquent. 26

Most juvenile delinquents are children who have been abandoned by their fathers.

- A close and intense relationship between a boy and his father prevents hostility and inappropriate aggressiveness. ²⁷
- According to the professional literature, the absence of the father is the single most important cause of poverty.²⁸ The same is true for crime. According to Kevin and Karen Wright,

Research into the idea that single-parent homes may produce more delinquents dates back to the early 19th century.... [O]fficials at New York State's Auburn Penitentiary, in an attempt to discern the causes of crime, studied the biographies of incarcerated men. Reports to the legislature in 1829 and 1830 suggested that family disintegration resulting from the death, desertion, or divorce of parents led to undisciplined children who eventually became criminals. Now well over a century later, researchers continue to examine the family background of unique populations and reach similar conclusions.²⁹

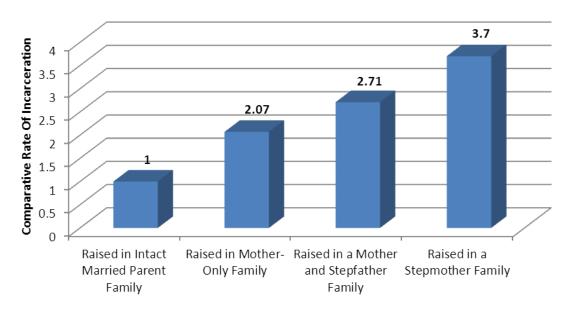
• Fatherless children are also often deprived of the love and affection they need from their mother, who is overwhelmed with the task of single-handedly raising her child(ren).



Family Structure: Comparative Rates of Youth Incarceration

Graph 6

C. Harper and S. McLanahan, "Father Absence and Youth Incarceration," ASA Annual Meeting, San Fransico, August 1998. Data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.



Abuse and Violence

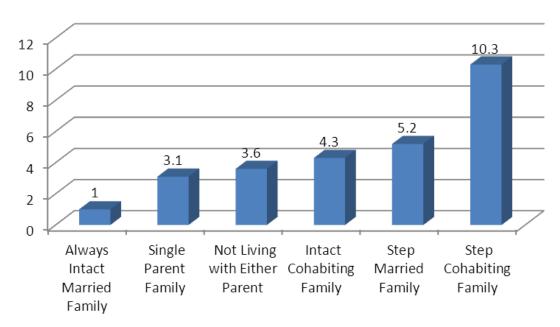
Evidence from the federal National Incidence Survey (2010) shows that the safest environment for a child—that is, the family environment with the lowest risk ratio for physical abuse—is one in which the biological parents are married and the family has always been intact:

- The rate of physical abuse is 3 times higher in the single parent family.
- The rate of physical abuse is 4 times higher if mother is cohabiting with the child's biological father (unmarried).
- The rate of physical abuse is 5 times higher if the child is living in a married step family.
- The rate of physical abuse is 10 times higher if the mother is cohabiting with a boyfriend.



Relative Rates of Physical Abuse by Family Structure

Graph 7
Source NIS-4, 2010



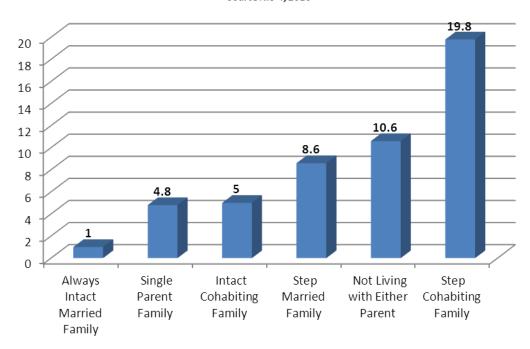
For sexual abuse the rates are even higher. Compared to the always intact married family:

- The rate of sexual abuse is 5 times higher in the single parent family and when both biological parents are cohabiting (i.e. unmarried).
- The rate of sexual abuse is 8.6 times higher if the child is living in a married step family.
- The rate of sexual abuse is 20 times higher if the mother is cohabiting with a boyfriend.



Relative Rates of Sexual Abuse by Family Structure

Graph 8
Source NIS-4, 2010



The families of incarcerated teenagers frequently share similar debilitating characteristics: the presence of physical abuse, heightened conflicts, alcohol abuse, and absent or broken marriages.³⁰

- Witnessing or experiencing abuse and violence increases the likelihood that a child will become a violent adult.³¹
- Evidence suggests that the United States will face increased levels of serious violent crime (murders, rapes, and assaults) at the hands of abused children when they reach their mid-to late-teenage years. According to Cathy Spatz Widom, Professor of Criminal Justice and Psychology at the State University of New York (SUNY) in Albany,

Early childhood victimization has demonstrable long-term consequences for delinquency, adult criminality, and violent behavior.... The experience of child abuse and neglect has a substantial impact even on individuals with otherwise little likelihood of engaging in officially recorded criminal behavior.³²

• According to studies of the official records of abused children and arrested offenders, the association between child abuse and crime is significant: between 14 percent and 26 percent. But this association is roughly three times greater—from 50 percent to 70 percent—when researchers go beyond the official reports of child abuse cases and study the reports of abuse given by the delinquents themselves. 4



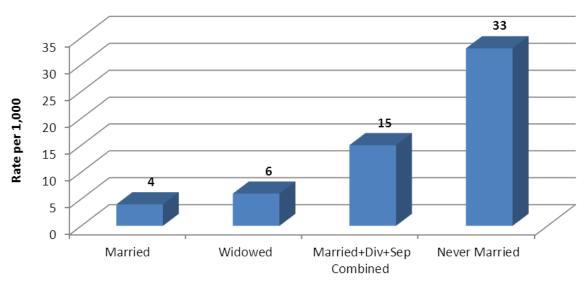
Community Influence on Crime

The family is fighting desperately with the violent neighborhood for the future of its children. Children raised in broken families face a number of community experiences that further put them at risk for juvenile delinquency. Three of the most pervasive experiences leading to crime include: rejection by other children, failure in school, and gang involvement.³⁵

- Closed off from the community of their peers, future criminals search out companions
 who feel comfortable with them. Not surprisingly, these companions are similarly
 aggressive-hostile children with whom they feel at ease and by whom they are
 accepted.
 - O The group reinforces its own aggressive-hostile ways and gradually rejects the conventional ways of normally attached children. Continued disruption at home, parents' continued use of harsh discipline, and the continued absence of a father all add to the growing hostility of these future delinquents.
- Single-parent neighborhoods tend to be high-crime neighborhoods.
- The illegitimate birth rate in many urban neighborhoods is a staggering 80 percent.³⁹
- Today's researchers, like those before them, find that a neighborhood composed mainly of single-parent families invariably is a chaotic, crime-ridden community⁴⁰ in which assaults are high⁴¹ and the gang—"the delinquent subcommunity"—assumes control.⁴²

U.S.: Partner/Spouse Violence against Mothers over 20 with Children under 12





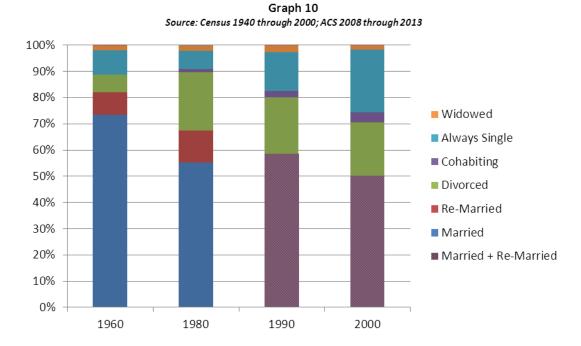


Educational Outcomes

Children raised in intact, married families tend to have better educational attainment and achievement than those from non-intact families.

- They are more likely to achieve higher education after graduating from high school than those from other family structures. 43
- A greater fraction of children from intact married families earn mostly A's in school, 44 and children in intact married families have the highest combined English and math grade point averages (GPAs).45
- High school students in intact families have GPAs 11 percent higher than those from divorced families.⁴⁶
- By age 13, there is an average difference of half a year in reading ability between children of divorced parents and children from intact families. 47

Maryland: Female High School Drop-outs Aged 35 to 39 By Family Structure

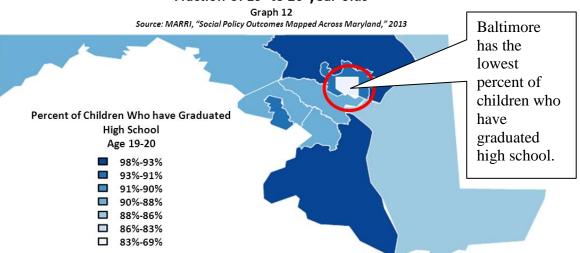




Maryland: Male High School Drop-outs Aged 35 to 39 by Family Structure

Graph 11 Source: Census 1940 through 2000; ACS 2008 through 2013 100% 90% Widowed 80% Always Single 70% ■ Cohabiting 60% Divorced 50% ■ Re-Married 40% Married 30% ■ Married + Re-Married 20% 10% 0% 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000

Maryland: High School Graduates Fraction of 19- to 20-year-olds



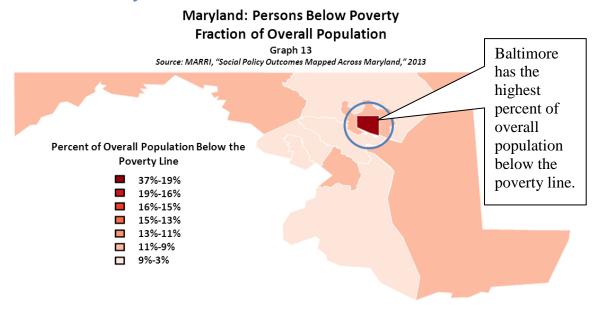
Poor education and school engagement frequently lead to criminal activity.

- Future criminals tend not to have good verbal memory at school or the ability to grasp the meaning of concepts, including moral concepts. They generally fail to learn reading and computation skills, undermining their performance in the middle grades.
- Future criminals often fail in the later grades and have no or low aspirations for school or work. 48 They begin to be truant and eventually drop out of school in their teens. 49



Economic Status

Welfare and Poverty



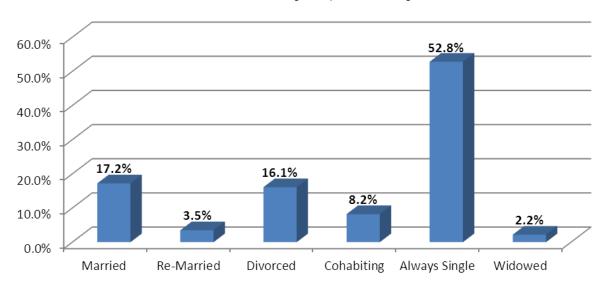
Children who grow up in intact, married families are least likely to experience poverty during their youth.

- Family intactness has the second-largest influence on overall diminishment of prime-age female and child poverty. 50
- Family intactness is the most important factor (or shares the place of greatest importance) in determining an area's dependence on welfare programs, including: food stamp recipiency, TANF, SSI, and public healthcare recipiency.
- Married families generally earn higher incomes than stepfamilies, cohabiting families, divorced families, separated families, and single-parent families.⁵¹



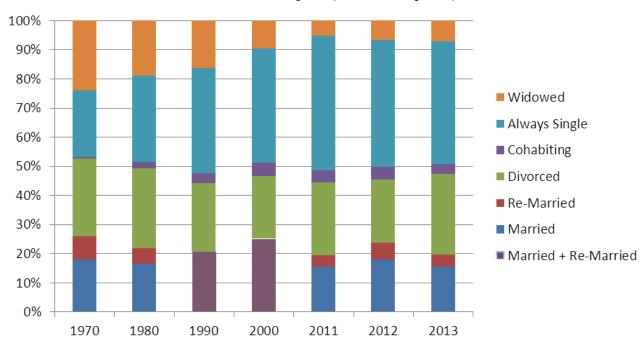
Maryland Adults: Family Structure of Adults; in Families below the Poverty Threshold 18 or Older; 2013

Graph 14
Source: Census 1940 through 2000; ACS 2008 through 2013



Maryland: Adults Receiving TANF or Welfare Age 18+ By Family Structure

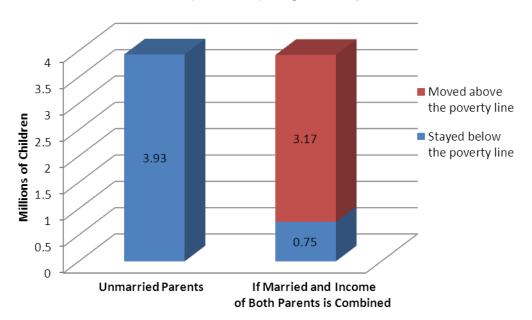
Graph 15
Source: Census 1940 through 2000; ACS 2008 through 2013; MARRI





Children in Poverty (Same Children, Two situations)

Chart 16
Source: CPS, Robert Rector, Heritage Foundation, 2002



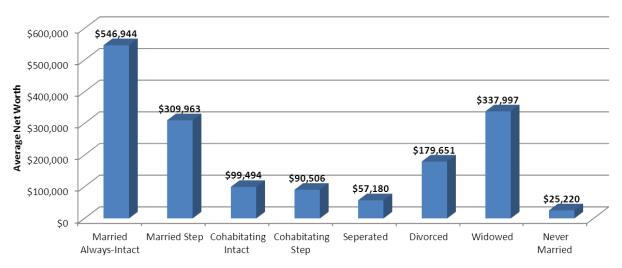
Income and Employment

- All three types of two-parent families with children under 18—intact-married families, stepfamilies, and cohabitants—put many more hours into the workplace, on average, than do the single-parent families. ⁵²
- The "marriage premium" is the name economists give to the increase in husbands' productivity and earnings caused by their entering marriage. Married men make, on average, almost 30 percent more than their non-married counterparts in hourly wages. 53
- Twice as many (32 percent) married fathers worked 45 hours or more per week in 1997, compared to cohabiting fathers (16 percent). 54



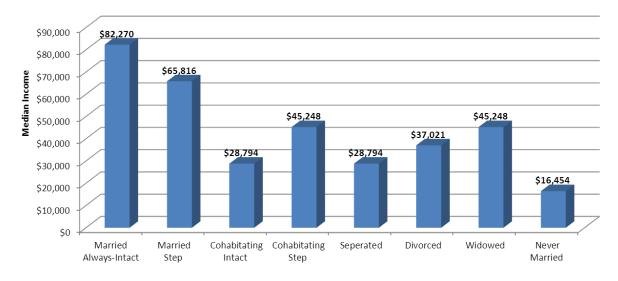
Average Net Worth of Households with Children by Family Structure

Graph 17
Source: Survey of Consumer Finance, 2007



Median Income of Households with Children by Family Structure, 2009

Graph 18
Source: Survey of Consumer Finance, 2007

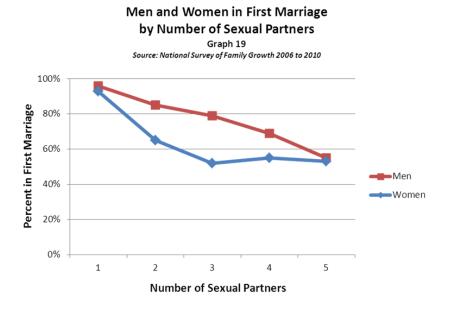




Sexual Attitudes and Out-of-Wedlock Births

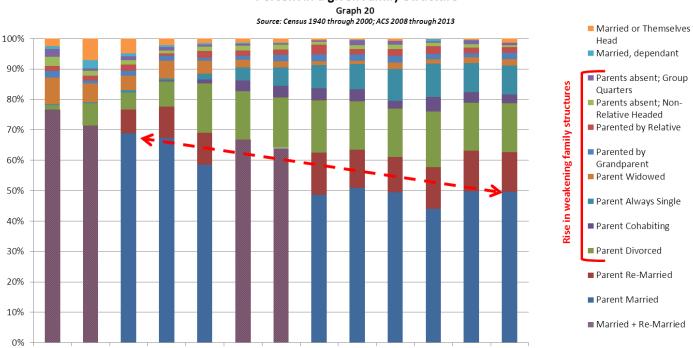
Children tend to adopt the sexual practices exemplified by their parents. Therefore, family intactness has strong, intergenerational effects on sexual mores.

- When children's parents divorce, the children's approval of premarital sex, cohabitation, and divorce rises dramatically, while their endorsement of marriage and childbearing falls.⁵⁵
- Children from divorced families are also more likely to believe that marriage is not important prior to having children and are more likely to have a child out of wedlock. This holds true even after controlling for socioeconomic status.⁵⁶
- Sexual permissiveness on the part of divorced parents significantly increases permissive attitudes and behavior in both their sons and daughters.⁵⁷
- American⁵⁸ and British⁵⁹ studies repeatedly show that daughters of divorced parents will be more likely to approve of premarital sexual intercourse⁶⁰ and teen sexual activity⁶¹ and to engage in early sexual intercourse outside of marriage.⁶²
- The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth reports that African-American girls are 42 percent less likely to have sexual intercourse before age 18 if their biological father is present at home. ⁶³
- The presence of a stepfather increases the likelihood of sexual intercourse before age 18 by 72 percent for Latino girls. 64
- In addition to an increased likelihood of being sexually active, girls from divorced families are more likely to engage in risky sexual behavior, to have more frequent sexual intercourse, and to have more sexual partners. 65
- Women whose parents separated during childhood are more likely to have an out-of-wedlock teenage pregnancy,⁶⁶ and men with divorced or separated parents are more likely to father a child with a teenage mother.
- A neighborhood composed mainly of single-parent families invariably is a chaotic, crimeridden community⁶⁷ in which assaults are high⁶⁸ and the gang assumes control.⁶⁹





Family Structure of 15- to 17-Year-Old New Mothers; Teens who have a less-than-1-year-old Child Percent in a given Family Structure





Conclusion

There is a clear and even desperate need to restore marriage among the poor in inner-city Baltimore. However, this task is beyond the competence of government. But that is not a fault in government—it is the nature of the problem. No one goes to government for love.

Marital stability depends on affection, care, loyalty and sexual fidelity, which is formed in the home. If the City Councils, the State of Maryland, or federal Cabinet members want to combat the social collapse of American cities, they must ask parents, church leaders, school principals and teachers to take on this work of the mind and heart.

An impoverished boy from inner-city Baltimore will not escape criminal activity because Baltimore receives a stimulus bill from the President; he will escape it if a caring teacher, compassionate pastor, or thoughtful adult mentors him so that he feels the support necessary to finish school, work at a job, and marry the mother of his children.

Government is not capable of doing everything, and clearly does not know how to heal the social brokenness of such communities. It will continue to fail the youth of Baltimore unless it looks to other institutions—the church, the school, the family and influential business leaders—to restore the family by restoring marriage in inner city Baltimore. Until that day comes the problems will only worsen; but when that day does come hope will already have arrived.



¹Baltimore was compared to cities with a population over 100,000. For more information, please see http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/crime/blog/bal-new-fbi-statistics-baltimore-no-5-in-murder-rate-20141110-story.html

Henry Potrykus and Patrick Fagan, "U.S. Social Policy Dependence on the Family," (January 2013). Available at http://marri.us/policy-2013

³ Patrick Fagan, Anne Dougherty, and Miriam McElvain, "164 Reasons to Marry" (February 2012) available at http://marri.us/reasons-to-marry.

⁴ Henry Potrykus and Patrick Fagan, "U.S. Social Policy Dependence on the Family," (January 2013). Available at http://marri.us/policy-2013

⁵ Henry Potrykus and Patrick Fagan, "U.S. Social Policy Dependence on the Family," (January 2013). Available at http://marri.us/policy-2013

⁶ Patrick F. Fagan and Nick Zill, "The Third Annual Index of Belonging and Rejection," (2013) available at http://downloads.frc.org/EF/EF13B31.pdf.

⁷ Social Outcomes of policy interest measured include: teenage out-of-wedlock birth; high school graduates; employment; earnings; fraction of households owning their home; persons below poverty; females below poverty; minors below poverty; food stamp recipients; TANF and state welfare transfers; Social Security and Disability Income for 25- to 54-year-olds; Social Security and Disability Income for 25- to 54-year-old males; Supplemental Security and Disability Income (SSI) for 25- to 54-year-old receiving public healthcare; minors receiving public healthcare; 25- to 54-year-olds receiving private healthcare minors receiving private healthcare.

⁸ Henry Potrykus and Patrick Fagan, "U.S. Social Policy Dependence on the Family," (January 2013). Available at http://marri.us/policy-2013

⁹ Patrick Fagan, Henry Potrykus, and Anna Dorminey, "Family Intactness: Influence on Major State Social Policy Outcomes," (July 2012) available at http://downloads.frc.org/EF/EF12G39.pdf.

¹⁰ Henry Potrykus and Patrick Fagan, "U.S. Social Policy Dependence on the Family," (January 2013). Available at http://marri.us/policy-2013

¹¹ Patrick F. Fagan, "The Real Root Causes of Violent Crime: The Breakdown of Marriage, Family, and Community," (March 1995). Available at http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/1995/03/bg1026nbsp-the-real-root-causes-of-violent-crime.

¹² Sampson, "Urban Black Violence: The Effect of Male Joblessness and Family Disruption"; Fagan, "Rising Illegitimacy: America's Social Catastrophe"; Smith and Jarjoura, "Social Structure and Criminal Victimization." As cited by Patrick F. Fagan in "The Real Root Causes of Violent Crimes" available at http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/1995/03/bg1026nbsp-the-real-root-causes-of-violent-crime.

¹³ United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau. "POV02. People in Families by Family Structure, Age, and Sex, Iterated by Income-to-Poverty Ratio and Race." *Current Population Survey, 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.* Washington: US Census Bureau, 2011. Web. 30 Jul. 2014. http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032011/pov/POV02 100.htm>.

¹⁴ United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau. "POV02. People in Families by Family Structure, Age, and Sex, Iterated by Income-to-Poverty Ratio and Race." *Current Population Survey, 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.* Washington: US Census Bureau, 2011. Web. 30 Jul. 2014. http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032011/pov/POV02 100.htm>.

¹⁵ Patrick F. Fagan and Christina Hadford, "The Fifth Annual Index of Belonging and Rejection," (February 2015) available at http://marri.us/index-2015.

Jennifer L. White *et al.*, "How Nearly Can We Tell?: Predictors of Childhood Conduct Disorder and Adolescent Delinquency," Criminology, Vol. 28. No. 4(1990), pp. 507-533. As cited by Patrick F. Fagan in "The Real Root Causes of Violent Crimes" available at http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/1995/03/bg1026nbsp-the-real-root-causes-of-violent-crime.

¹⁷ Robert E. Billingham and Nicole L. Notebaert, "Divorce and Dating Violence Revisited: Multivariate Analyses Using Straus's Conflict Tactics Subscores," *Psychological Reports* 73 (1993): 679-684. As cited by Patrick F. Fagan and Aaron Churchill in "The Effects of Divorce on Children" available at http://marri.us/effects-divorce-children.



¹⁸ Kathleen Boyce Rodgers and Hilary A. Rose, "Risk and Resiliency Factors among Adolescents Who Experience Marital Transitions," Journal of Marriage and Family 64 (2002): 1028-1029. As cited by Patrick F. Fagan and Aaron Churchill in "The Effects of Divorce on Children" available at http://marri.us/effects-divorce-children. ¹⁹ Patrick F. Fagan, "The Real Root Causes of Violent Crime: The Breakdown of Marriage, Family, and Community," (March 1995). Available at http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/1995/03/bg1026nbsp-the-real- root-causes-of-violent-crime.

²⁰ Analysis of the fifty states and the District of Columbia shows a correlation of .69 between juvenile violent crime arrest rates and the percentage of children residing in single-parent homes within the states or District. Using statewide figures for the states and the District of Columbia, Heritage staff used multiple regression analysis to estimate the effect of family structure on juvenile crime, holding constant the degree of urbanization. The juvenile violent crime arrest rate served as the dependent variable. Two independent variables were used in the regression: the percentage of children residing in single-parent families and the percentage of the population within the state or District residing within standard metropolitan areas. These data indicate that a 10 percent increase in single-parent variable leads to a 17 percent increase in juvenile crime. Both the family structure variable and the urbanization variable were found to have a statistically significant effect on juvenile crime, with over a 99 percent level of significance. Detailed results are available from the author.

²¹ Ronald L. Simons and Joan F. Robertson, "The Impact of Parenting Factors, Deviant Peers, and Coping Style Upon Adolescent Drug Use," Family Relations, Vol. 38 (1989), pp. 273-281, citing original work by Gerald R. Patterson (1982, 1986). As cited by Patrick F. Fagan in "The Real Root Causes of Violent Crimes" available at http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/1995/03/bg1026nbsp-the-real-root-causes-of-violent-crime.

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